

MALAY STATES UNDER BRITISH PROTECTION

Industries Are Mostly Controlled by Chinese.

PENANG--The Malay Federation consists of the four states of Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan and Pahang. They occupy the greater part of the Malay Peninsula, which lies between the Straits of Malacca on the west and the China Sea on the east. The first three named have a combined coast line on the Straits of Malacca of about 190 miles, while the latter borders the China Sea and has a coast line of about 130 miles. The combined area of the four states is a little less than that of the State of Maine. The whole of the peninsula is tropical in character and is well watered by innumerable streams, some of which are navigable for steamers of light draft as far as fifty miles from the sea.

An agreement was signed in July, 1895, between the rulers of the Malay States and the English government, whereby the federation was formed and the different countries passed under the protection of British rule. The arrangement is simply that the rulers of the above named states agree to accept an English officer, to be styled the Resident General, as the agent and representative of Great Britain, and to follow his advice in all matters of administration other than those touching upon the Mohammedan religion. The necessity for federation resulted from constant quarrels and factional fights between the different states. It has proved to be a great improvement over the old regime. The disbursement of public money is so arranged that a shortage in one state is made good by another in more prosperous circumstances.

MALAYS NOT INDUSTRIOUS.

The population of the Federated Malay States is a little less than 700,000. The Malay is not industrious. As far as his capacity as a workman is concerned he is numbered among the most unreliable races in the Orient. He labors at agriculture in an indifferent way, and devotes some of his time to the collection of forest produce. He engages in fishing and boating, being particularly expert in the latter. It is said that he is always a good sportsman, working harder and with more enjoyment with that object in view than for the sake of promoting his own profit.

Those who know them best despair of the Malay ever being capable of much improvement. The lower tribes are so shiftless and lazy that they are satisfied with a bare existence. The better classes have more pride, but are still too indolent to work, preferring to live by taxing the Chinese, who control nearly all the business of the country. The Malays are generally misunderstood. Instead of being the sullen, revengeful characters commonly portrayed in books of travel, they are merely a thrifty, indifferent race, having too little ambition to be ordinarily anything but peaceful. They have so little energy that they show no resentment whatever toward foreigners for taking the leading part in the commercial, agricultural and mining pursuits of their country.

The Chinese are in the lead in almost every branch of trade and industry. In numbers they outstrip every other nationality and their domination is almost complete. This is not surprising. The result has been the same wherever the hard-working, economical Chinese has been permitted to try conclusions with any race on its native heath. That easy-going child of the jungle, the Malay, could hardly be expected to resist the rivalry of the Chinaman when the strongest nations are crying out against his wearing competition.

CHINESE CONTROL. TIN MINES.

The Chinese practically monopolize the tin mining industry. Although they work with the most primitive appliances, their system is so economical that they are able to realize a profit from land which an European could not work at all. The tin fields are found in alluvial flats with the ore-bearing stratum resting on a slip of grey or white clay bottom, varying in thickness from a few inches to six or



MOHAMMEDAN TEMPLE IN PENANG.

eight feet. The method of working the mines is to remove the earth covering the tin bearing strata, then raise the "wash dirt" to the surface, where it is separated by exposure to a stream of water. The coolies raise the ore in baskets and the water they use is generally pumped by old-fashioned Chinese over-shot water wheels and endless chain pumps.

Most of the Chinese mining is done on the truck system, all food and supplies being furnished by the mine owners, or those who advance the money to work the claim. Many of these

tiling with him for the price of food and all supplies, whatever profit remains is divided equally among the men.

AGRICULTURE IS PRIMITIVE.

Only a very small area of land is under cultivation in the Malay States. Agriculture is in a very primitive state. This is explained by the scant population, and the ease with which the natives can sustain life. In some districts the density is only six to the square mile, or one to every one hundred acres of ground. In some portions of the

Malays versus Filipinos. One of the great hindrances to the advancement of the country is the same that confronted our authorities in the Philippines, namely, the use of so many different dialects among the population. The difficulty of teaching English to the Malay children is that they have so little opportunity to speak the language out of school hours. A sufficient number of them cannot be induced to attend school to warrant the hope that it will ever become the common language. In one thickly settled locality an English school had to be abolished because only three pupils attended. It developed that these were the sons of the Sultan, and as soon as the novelty wore off they lost interest and failed to attend.

As an encouraging contrast to this may be cited the increase of desire for education in the Philippines, where over 500,000 children of the masses are in daily attendance at the common schools. The difference is accounted for by the fact that the Philippines are Catholics and the Malays are not. Whatever may be said in disparagement of Spanish rule in the southern archipelago, there can be no discounting the credit due the friars for introducing Christianity. The Filipinos are not the highest type of believers, but they are better appreciated after seeing the Malays.

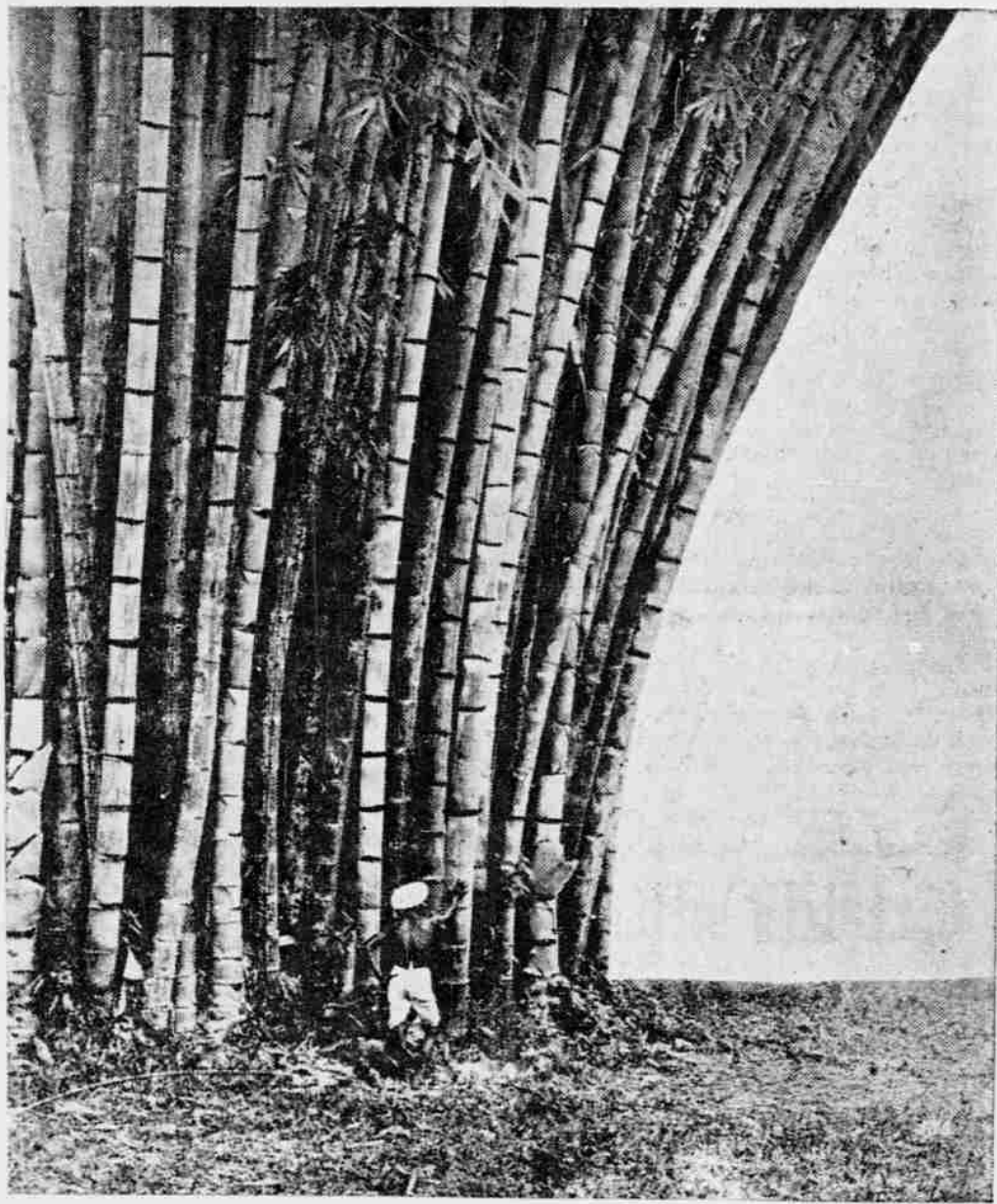
One of the advantages to be found in the Malay States is a good system of public roads. The highways are maintained at the expense of the government without any toll being charged for their use. The bridges are of a substantial character and are capable of sustaining all kinds of wheel traffic. The roads are durable on account of being surfaced with granite or limestone, and are generally kept in good order. Where the traffic is not sufficient to warrant the construction of roads, hundreds of miles of bridle paths have been constructed. On the whole the system of roads in the Malay States is probably unsurpassed in the East.

MALAYS ARE FISHERMEN. A large portion of the east coast Malays depend principally upon the fishing industry. On account of their catch being used almost entirely for home consumption, there are no restrictions in the way of taxes. There are hundreds of kinds of sea fish in the waters along the coast and they are obtainable in large quantities, but this supply is not available for the use of the inhabitants of inland districts, because it is impossible to keep the fish fresh for more than a few hours. In the interior all Malays have equal right to fish in the rivers, but each owner of a swamp or pond maintains the exclusive right to fish in his own property. The fishermen in most of the eastern countries are known as a bad lot, and there are often serious disturbances among them.

The national sport of the Filipinos is cock-fighting, but the Malays amuse themselves by matching pugnacious little fishes called Karin. These tiny warriors are so vicious that when two of them are pitted against each other they will fight to the death. Great interest is displayed in a match of this kind, bets being freely laid on the outcome. A popular form of fishing which is now prohibited by law, was dragging the fish by means of the tuba root, then spearing them as they floated helplessly on the surface. Before the prohibitive law was passed a tuba fish was the stock entertainment of the Malay Rajas on their state occasions.

A TREASURE MOUNTAIN. The State of Pahang boasts the highest mountain in the Malay States. It is a mountain of gold, but the gold is not in the form of nuggets or veins, but in the form of a treasure mountain. The mountain is covered with a thick growth of forest, and the gold is hidden in the roots of the trees. The gold is so pure that it can be used for making jewelry. The mountain is a great source of wealth for the people of Pahang.

METHODS OF WHITE PLANTERS. White planters who open up coconut or rubber plantations manage to derive profit by utilizing the land between the young trees for planting various subsidiary crops, such as bananas, Chinese yams and vegetables. In clearing a piece of land for a plantation the dead wood is piled and burned on the ground, because the ashes enrich the soil and tend to destroy the breeding places of white ants and coconut beetles which are most destructive.



A CLUMP OF BAMBOO.

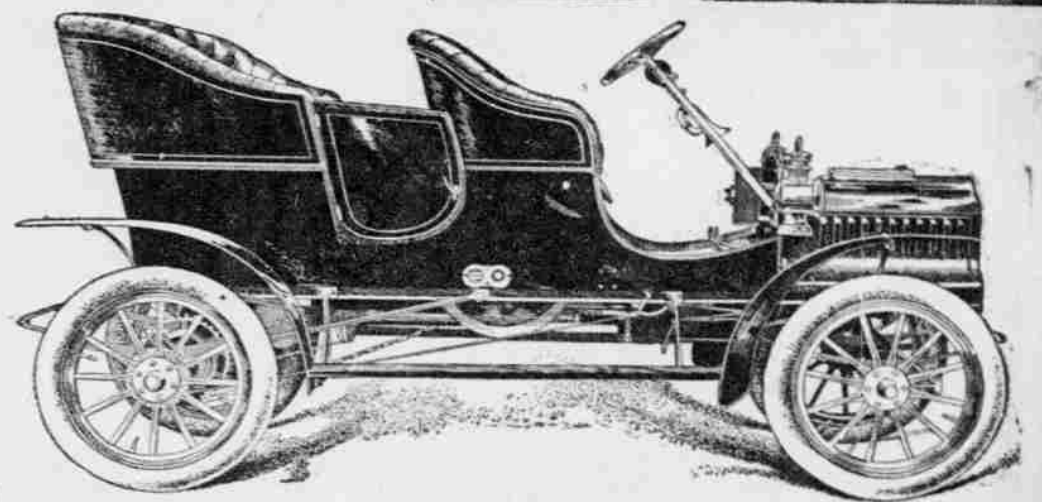
mines are operated that could not be worked if it were not for the gain derived from the sale of food to the coolies. Nearly all the men engaged in this work are brought into the country on what is known as the contract system, their fare being paid by some one who controls their wages until the obligation is discharged. Another arrangement is for a money lender to advance the capital for a crowd of coolies to work a claim, and after set-

country the traveler will not see a human habitation for days. By working at intervals in the mines, or by keeping a small garden or patch of rice land, the ordinary Malay secures enough money to make his existence comfortable and easy according to his standard of life. Although corn is grown in considerable quantities, it is always of a very poor quality. Potatoes cannot be raised except in the higher latitudes. Such vegetables as onions, carrots and tomatoes can only be cultivated at an elevation, and the seed must be imported.

When the farming methods of the natives are considered it is not surprising that their efforts bring so little return. The plow they use is a clumsy wooden implement which little more than scratches the surface of the soil. In harvesting they use a small hand blade which cuts only one stalk of grain at a time. This process is so slow and laborious that a crowd of field hands will work half a month in clearing up a piece of grain that one of our modern reapers would cut in two or three hours.

The Malays use water buffaloes as work animals, and suffer great loss from the frequent attacks of rinderpest. Instead of protecting their fields with fences they stretch strings of charms on posts around the cultivated patch and believe that spirits will prey upon anything that dares to pass under these charms. Rats, mice and bats are other enemies of the crops, but the farmer takes no precaution against these except to perform certain incantations and magic ceremonies which are a part of his religious belief. The fact that his fields continue to suffer from the ravages of such vermin does not seem to destroy his belief in the efficacy of the charms.

METHODS OF WHITE PLANTERS. White planters who open up coconut or rubber plantations manage to derive profit by utilizing the land between the young trees for planting various subsidiary crops, such as bananas, Chinese yams and vegetables. In clearing a piece of land for a plantation the dead wood is piled and burned on the ground, because the ashes enrich the soil and tend to destroy the breeding places of white ants and coconut beetles which are most destructive.



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TYPE OF MALAY MAN.